

REMARKS

Claims 1 and 3-8 are currently pending in the application. By this amendment, claim 1 is amended, claim 2 is canceled, and claims 4-8 are added for the Examiner's consideration. The above amendments do not add new matter to the application and are fully supported by the specification (for example, see pages 6-10 of the specification). Reconsideration of the rejected claims in view of the above amendments and the following remarks is respectfully requested.

Allowed Claims

Applicants gratefully acknowledge the Examiner's indication that claim 2 contains allowable subject matter and would be allowable if presented in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Accordingly, by this amendment, claim 2 has been rewritten in independent and allowable form by incorporating the features of claim 2 into claim 1 and canceling claim 2.

Moreover, as claim 3 depends from now allowable independent claim 1, this claim, too, should be indicated as allowable.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 103 are Moot

Applicants submit that, by the present amendment, the rejection of claims 1 and 3 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) is moot.

While Applicants do not acquiesce that any proper combination of the applied documents of record renders unpatentable the combination of features recited in claims

1 and 3, in an effort to advance prosecution, Applicants have amended claim 1 to incorporate the indicated allowable subject matter of claim 2. However, Applicants reserve the right to refile the subject matter of original claims 1 and 3 in one or more continuation applications.

Accordingly, Applicants request that the Examiner indicate that the rejection of claims 1 and 3 is now moot, and that all pending claims are allowable.

Added Claims

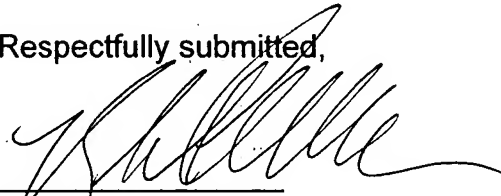
By this amendment, claims 4-8 are added for consideration by the Examiner. New claims 4-8 further define Applicants' invention and are believed to be patentably distinct from the applied prior art and in condition for allowance. Applicants submit that the art of record fails to teach or suggest the combination of features recited in new claims 4-8. In particular, Applicants note that the recited arrangement of elements are not suggested by Junichi et al. (JP 11205114).

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicants submit that all of the claims are patentably distinct from the prior art of record and are in condition for allowance. The Examiner is respectfully requested to pass the above application to issue. The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below, if needed. Applicants hereby make a written conditional petition for

extension of time, if required. Please charge any deficiencies in fees and credit any overpayment of fees to Attorney's Deposit Account No. 19-0089.

Respectfully submitted,



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February 17, 2006
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